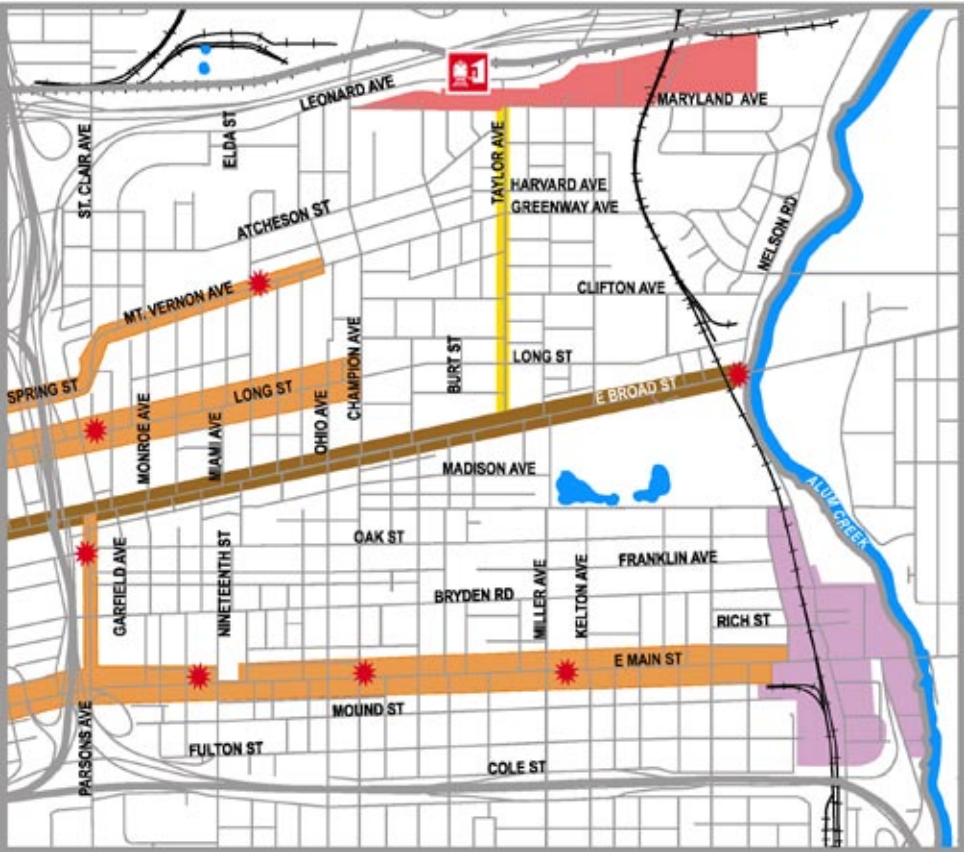


INTRODUCTION

The Near East Side was the home to Columbus’ early “upper crust” and Columbus’ “Bronzeville” neighborhood, an African American “city within a city”. Then and now, the Near East Side is a diverse, vibrant neighborhood. The Near East Area Plan, adopted by City Council on September 19, 2005, is a roadmap to guide the continued revitalization and redevelopment of the Near East Side. (The complete plan is available at www.columbus.gov). The plan’s Development Strategy prioritizes the development of the Near East Side’s historic commercial districts. Focusing development on the “visible edge” of the neighborhood is analogous to enhancing a home’s curbside appeal to improve its market value. The plan suggests that after development is sparked at the area’s visible edges, revitalization will be enhanced throughout the neighborhood. Additionally, the historic commercial districts provide an opportunity for economically viable high-density new urban development that will enhance the potential for new retail at the specified commercial nodes.

The plan provides design guidelines for 1) housing, 2) commercial districts, and 3) East Broad Street. These guidelines provide criteria to ensure compatible new commercial and residential development, yet encourage contemporary expression. The East Broad Street design guidelines seek to maintain the “look and feel” of the thoroughfare, one of Columbus’ most beautiful streets. This section of the plan strongly discourages the demolition of contributing buildings and provides guidelines for new construction.

DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY



- Lower and Medium Density Residential
-
-
- Office/Light Industrial/Mixed Uses

 East Broad Street Higher Density Residential/Mixed Use Development Commercial District Nodes

The plan’s Implementation element includes a development review checklist that serves as a guide for checking a proposed development for consistency with the plan. The checklist is intended to allow stake holders to evaluate development proposals against the plan’s specific guidelines and recommendations. This should streamline the decision-making process, enhance neighborhood communication, and maximize the potential for plan implementation.

HOUSING DESIGN GUIDELINES

The plan includes housing design guidelines which are meant to provide a general framework for evaluating proposed infill housing and form a basis for consistent, informed decision-making. They are intended to educate both community members and developers about appropriate housing for the Near East Side, and prevent the construction of new housing that is incompatible with the scale, architecture, and general character of the neighborhood.



The overall goal for incorporating new infill housing into the neighborhood is compatibility, not imitation or the creation of a false historic appearance. The ideal is quality design that conforms to the existing building patterns and “rhythm” of the area, yet maintains its own identity as a new home. Compatibility means the existing homes will be used to determine the appropriate height, massing/scale, materials, porches, roof pitch, setbacks, and window and door proportions for the new construction.

The guidelines are meant to provide enough flexibility that they will not pose an extraordinary financial burden on potential developers. To the contrary, having a clear vision of acceptable housing design upfront should play a key role in avoiding potential conflict between developers and neighborhood leaders. This will help to streamline the development process and encourage neighborhood preservation and enhancement through redevelopment of blighted, distressed, and under utilized properties.

COMMERCIAL DESIGN GUIDELINES

The Near East Side has four primary commercial districts: Parsons Avenue, Main Street, Long Street and Mount Vernon Avenue. The purpose of the Commercial Design Guidelines is to enhance the continued revitalization of these districts and serve as mixed-use cores of the surrounding neighborhood. Included are general design recommendations relevant to all of the commercial districts and specific land use, transportation, and other recommendations for each district.



Long Street rendering.

THE EAST BROAD STREET DESIGN GUIDELINES

East Broad Street is Columbus’ “grand boulevard” and is rich in architectural heritage. The Near East Area Plan recommends office and residential land uses along East Broad Street and highly discourages demolition of contributing structures.

The East Broad Street Design Guidelines were developed to provide guidance for new construction and address setbacks, site development capacity, parking, building materials, building height, orientation and other issues. The guidelines stress the importance of the preservation and restoration of existing historically significant and contributing buildings along East Broad Street.



Courthouse apartments would be appropriate on E. Broad Street.

THE DEVELOPMENT REVIEW CHECKLIST

The Development Review Checklist is a summary of the development standards and recommendations found throughout the Near East Area Plan. The checklist is designed for application by stake holders in the review of development proposals for consistency with plan provisions. It is intended for use with zoning and variance requests, investments in community facilities and infrastructure, and other initiatives or requests impacting the built environment in the community. It is also intended as a means to provide a clear, concise record of stake holder input in each stage of project consideration. Users of the checklist are strongly encouraged to review additional background information for each item on the checklist by referencing the page number cited.

DEVELOPMENT REVIEW CHECKLIST

I. Commercial/Office/Light Industrial Proposals

Developer has reviewed the recommendations of the Near East Area Plan?

Proposal is in an existing commercial district*?

If proposal is in an existing commercial district, is it consistent with specific land use, transportation, and other specific recommendations from the Commercial District Guidelines in this Plan?

If proposal is for outside of one of the existing commercial districts, consider the criteria.

For new churches, is proposal in or near an existing commercial district and does it consider the potential for shared parking?

If proposal is for office or light industrial use, is project in area identified for office or light industrial on the Development Strategy map?

Does project suggest the addition of new or expansion of an existing social service agency?

Is building height compatible with building heights in the immediate area?

Do new commercial facades, including window and door patterns/proportions complement nearby historic buildings?

Are traditional lot widths expressed in the facade?

Are entryways recessed from the facade line?

Is alley access maintained?

Is parking located to the side or rear of the building?

Are parking requirements (which consider/maintain the availability of on-street parking) addressed?

Is parking lot appropriately screened and landscaped?

Is shared parking being considered?

Does the project provide spaces and/or racks for bicycles?

If a drive-thru is proposed, is it proposed for the rear or side of the building?

If new construction, is building setback within ten (10) feet of sidewalk?

Is the project mixed-use?

If mixed use, are retail uses at street level?

*The existing Near East Side commercial districts are Main Street, Parsons Avenue, Long Street, and Mt. Vernon Avenue.

II. Residential Proposals

Developer has reviewed the recommendations of the Near East Area Plan?

Is housing market rate?

Is new housing located on the “visible edges” of a neighborhood, as identified on the Development Strategy Map?

Does project propose the renovation of an existing structure?

If demolition of an historic structure is proposed, has its relocation been investigated?

Does project propose the reversion a multi-family structure back to single-family structure?

Does project result in the deconcentration of existing subsidized housing?

Does project provide a percentage of affordable housing?

Is housing density consistent with housing types and densities in the immediate neighborhood?

If higher density housing is proposed, is it within or adjacent to existing commercial district?

If higher density and not within or adjacent to existing commercial district, does project propose owner-occupied building(s) that utilize extraordinary high level of design?

Is new housing similar in height and widths to adjacent structures?

Are housing materials guided by the predominant materials of adjacent structures?

Do porches repeat the proportions of other nearby homes?

Are the roof pitch, height, and shape compatible with surrounding structures?

Are setbacks similar to those of adjacent houses?

Are windows and doors of an appropriate size, width, and spacing?

Is the garage located behind the house?

Is alley access maintained?

Are additions placed to the rear of the structure?

Are additions distinguishable from the original structure?

III. Transportation and Community Service Related Projects

Developer has reviewed the recommendations of the Near East Area Plan?

For proposed street improvements and other investments in the right-of-way, is project consistent with specific recommendations from the Commercial District Guidelines from the Near East Area Plan?

For projects in District 1 (Northwest), does proposal consider the potential for new street connections?

For projects in the I-70/71 corridors, does proposal enhance connections to downtown and adjacent neighborhoods and provide bridges with enhanced pedestrian/bicycle facilities?

Are landscaping, sidewalk improvements, bikeways, signage or gateways used to enhance connectivity?

Are mid-block crosswalks provided?

Do traffic-calming devices utilize historically sensitive materials?

Is traffic calming for schools and other community facilities being established?

Does project consider/improve connectivity between recreation centers, parks, schools and other facilities?

Are pedestrian scale lighting fixtures being installed?

Is the existing street and alley grid maintained?

Are sidewalk connections being maintained and/or improved?

Are bike lanes or other provisions for bicycles provided?

Is project consistent with bike route and trails plan from the Near East Area Plan?

For projects near existing/planned multi-purpose trails (Alum Creek and I-670 trails), does proposal consider signage and other enhancements to said trails?

For projects within the I-670 corridor, does proposal consider the potential for light rail?

Are existing brick streets maintained?

For school proposals, does the project consider the preservation of historically significant buildings?

IV. East Broad Street Proposals

Developer has reviewed the recommendations of the Near East Area Plan?

Is the proposal for an office and/or residential land use?

Will the project result in the demolition of a contributing building?

If the project is for the renovation of a contributing building, is the proposal consistent with the city of Columbus Historic Resources Commission Architectural Guidelines?

If the proposed building is adjacent to an existing historic district, does it take its design cues from the buildings in the historic district?

Is the proposed building material brick?

Is the parking proposed at the rear of the building with appropriate buffering and landscaping?

Is the proposed building setback the average of neighboring buildings?

Is the proposed building height compatible with neighboring buildings?

Are roof type and shape appropriate?

Is roof pitch within 8/12 and 15/12?

Does the structure have appropriate dormers?

Are ground floors elevated at least two (2) to three (3) feet off the ground?

Is building width between thirty-five (35) and forty-five (45) feet?)

Are buildings separated by fifteen (15) to twenty (20) feet?

Does the building proposal utilize a tri-partite facade design?

Is the height/width ratio appropriate?

Is the orientation of the building consistent with neighboring structures?

Is the size of the building appropriate for the parcel size?

Does the building proposal include an attentiveness to building details such as eaves, dentils, coursing, mullions, sills, etc.?

Does the building entryway and/or porch adequately address the street?

Are the number, depth, dimensions, and proportions of proposed windows appropriate?

Is any proposed signage appropriate?

Is landscaping/fencing appropriate and consistent with the planned downtown Broad Street median?

Are dumpsters, air conditioning units and/or other mechanicals screened from view?



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